

What is claimed is:

1. A system in which programs and associated program data are displayed for users by an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, comprising:

means for displaying the programs and associated program data on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide; and

means for digitally storing the programs and associated program data in a digital storage device contained in the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

2. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the display means further comprises means for displaying a set-up screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

3. The system defined in claim 2 wherein the set-up screen comprises means for providing a user with an opportunity to define one or more storage options.

4. The system defined in claim 3 wherein the storage options comprise one or more storage options selected from the group consisting of: languages, video format, enforcement of parental control on storage, and auto-erasing viewed entries.

5. The system defined in claim 4 further

comprising means for digitally storing the programs in a language on a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the language storage option.

6. The system defined in claim 4 further comprising means for digitally storing the programs in a video format on a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the video format storage option.

7. The system defined in claim 4 further comprising means for digitally storing the programs and associated program data on a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the enforcement of parental control on storage option.

8. The system defined in claim 4 further comprising means for automatically deleting programs and associated program data from a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the auto-erase viewed entries storage option.

9. The system defined in claim 2 wherein the set-up screen comprises means for providing a user with an opportunity to define playback options.

10. The system defined in claim 9 wherein the playback options comprise one or more playback options selected from the group consisting of: default language, default video format, skip commercials.

11. The system defined in claim 10 wherein the display means displays the digitally stored programs and associated program data in a language on the user television program equipment with the interactive television program guide using the default language playback option.

12. The system defined in claim 10 wherein the display means displays the digitally stored programs and program data in a video format on the user television equipment with the interactive television program guide using the default video format playback option.

13. The system defined in claim 10 further comprising:

means for determining whether the digitally stored programs contain advertising using the interactive television program guide; and

wherein the display means skips displaying the advertising information when displaying the digitally stored programs and programming data with the interactive television program guide using the skip commercials playback option.

14. The system defined in claim 2 wherein the set-up screen comprises means for providing a user with an opportunity to select components for display in screens that display program information.

15. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the display means further comprises means for

displaying a recording schedule screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

16. The system defined in claim 15 wherein the recording schedule screen comprises:

an indication of the programs currently scheduled for storage by the digital storage means;

means for providing a user with an opportunity to select one of the programs; and

wherein the display means further comprises means for displaying a selected program listing information screen for the selected program on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

17. The system defined in claim 16 wherein the selected program listing information screen comprises one or more fields of associated program data for the selected program.

18. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the selected program listing information screen further comprises:

one or more user fields; and

means for providing a user with an opportunity to enter user information into one or more of the user fields.

19. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the display means further comprises means for displaying a program listings screen on the user

television equipment using the interactive television program guide, the program listings screen comprising means for providing the user with an opportunity to select a program listing.

20. The system defined in claim 19 wherein the means for displaying a program listings screen further comprises means for displaying program listings in subsets of listings according to one or more organization criteria.

21. The system defined in claim 20 further comprising means for providing a user with an opportunity to select the organization criteria.

22. The system defined in claim 20 further comprising means for providing a user with an opportunity to define the organization criteria.

23. The system defined in claim 19 wherein the means for displaying a program listings screen further comprises means for displaying program listings in sorted lists according to sorting criteria.

24. The system defined in claim 23 further comprising means for providing the user with an opportunity to select the sorting criteria.

25. The system defined in claim 19 wherein the program listing screen comprises listings of programs stored by the digital storage means.

26. The system defined in claim 19 wherein the display means further comprises means for displaying a program listings information screen for the selected program listing on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

27. The system defined in claim 26 wherein the program listings information screen comprises one or more fields of associated program data selected from the group consisting of: title, description, episode, channel, duration, viewed, cast members, category(ies), language, video format, start and end time, date, re-run indicator, stereo indicator, close-captioned indicator, and other information.

28. The system defined in claim 25 wherein:
the display means further comprises
means for displaying one or more on-screen options; and
further comprising means for providing a
user with an opportunity to select an on-screen option.

29. The system defined in claim 19 wherein the means for displaying program listings further comprises means for displaying program listings in a program listings grid.

30. The system defined in claim 29 wherein the program listings grid contains one or more rows of listings of programs stored by the digital storage means.

31. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the display means further comprises means for displaying the digitally stored programs and associated program data on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide to provide users with an opportunity to access the associated program data as if the programs and program data were being originally aired.

32. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the digital storage means further comprises means for digitally storing additional program components on a digital storage device.

33. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the associated program data comprises program listings data supplied by a main facility.

34. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the associated program data comprises user added information.

35. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising means for transferring the digitally stored programs to a secondary storage device using the interactive television program guide.

36. A system in which programs and associated program data are displayed for users by an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, comprising:

 a digital storage device in the user

television equipment for digitally storing the programs and associated program data using the interactive television program guide; and

means for maintaining a directory of the digitally stored associated program data using the interactive television program guide.

37. The system define in claim 36 further comprising a means for displaying a directory listing screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

38. The system defined in claim 37 wherein the directory listing screen comprises:

means for indicating directory entry information; and

means for providing a user with an opportunity to select directory entry information;

wherein the display means further comprises means for displaying a full entry information screen in response to the selection by a user of directory information.

39. The system defined in claim 38 wherein the full entry information screen comprises a plurality of fields of directory entry information selected from the group consisting of: title, description, episode, channel, duration, viewed, cast members, category(ies), language, video format, start and end time, date, re-run indicator, stereo indicator, close-captioned indicator, and other information.

40. The system defined in claim 39 wherein the full entry information screen further comprises:
one or more user-defined fields; and
means for providing a user with an opportunity to enter user information in one or more of the user-defined fields.

41. The system defined in claim 36 further comprising:

means for displaying an edit screen; and
means for editing portions of the digitally stored programs and associated program data from the digital storage device using the interactive television program guide.

42. The system defined in claim 41 wherein the edit screen comprises means for providing a user with an opportunity to define the portions of the digitally stored programs and associated program data edited by the editing means.

43. The system defined in claim 42 wherein the partial edit screen further comprises a video feedback area.

44. The system defined in claim 36 wherein:
the digital storage device digitally stores the programs and associated program data on removable digital storage media using the interactive television program guide; and
the maintaining means maintains the digitally stored associated program data in a global

media library using the interactive television program guide.

45. The system defined in claim 44 further comprising means for displaying a global media library screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

46. The system defined in claim 45 wherein:

the global media library screen comprises means for providing a user with an opportunity to select a program stored on the removable storage media; and

means for displaying an indication that the removable storage medium containing the selected program is not loaded in the digital storage device.

47. A system in which programs and associated program data are displayed for users by an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, comprising:

a digital storage device in the user television equipment for digitally storing the programs and associated program data using the interactive television program guide;

means for defining a super-program sequence; and

means for displaying the programs and segments of the programs and associated program data according to the defined super-program sequence on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

48. The system defined in claim 47 wherein the defining means further comprises means for displaying a super-program screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

49. The system defined in claim 48 wherein the super-program screen comprises:

an area indicating programs stored on the digital storage device; and

means for providing a user with an opportunity to select a program to be included in the super-program sequence.

50. The system defined in claim 48 wherein:

the super-program screen further comprises an area for providing a user with an opportunity to define play segments; and

the display means further comprises means for displaying play segments of the programs and associated program data according to the super-program sequence on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

51. The system defined in claim 50 wherein the area for providing a user with an opportunity to define play segments comprises:

a play segment indicator; and

one or more markers for defining the play segment.

52. The system defined in claim 48 wherein

the super-program screen further comprises a video feedback area.

53. The system defined in claim 47 further comprising means for transferring the digitally stored programs according to the defined super-program to a secondary storage device using the interactive television program guide.

54. A method in which programs and associated program data are displayed for users by an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, comprising the steps of:

displaying the programs and associated program data on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide; and

digitally storing the programs and associated program data in a digital storage device contained in the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

55. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising the step of displaying a set-up screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

56. The method defined in claim 55 wherein the step of displaying a set-up screen further comprises the step of providing a user with an opportunity to define one or more storage options.

57. The method defined in claim 56 wherein

the step of displaying a set-up screen further comprises the step of providing a user with an opportunity to define one or more storage options selected from the group consisting of: languages, video format, enforcement of parental control on storage, and auto-erasing viewed entries.

58. The method defined in claim 57 further comprising the step of digitally storing the programs in a language on a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the language storage option.

59. The method defined in claim 57 further comprising the step of digitally storing the programs in a video format on a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the video format storage option.

60. The method defined in claim 57 further comprising the step of digitally storing the programs and associated program data on a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the enforcement of parental control on storage option.

61. The method defined in claim 57 further comprising the step of automatically deleting programs and associated program data from a digital storage device with the interactive television program guide using the auto-erase viewed entries storage option.

62. The method defined in claim 55 wherein

the step of displaying a set-up screen further comprises the step of providing a user with an opportunity to define playback options.

63. The method defined in claim 55 wherein the step of displaying a set-up screen further comprises the step of providing a user with an opportunity to define one or more playback options selected from the group consisting of: default language, default video format, skip commercials.

64. The method defined in claim 63 further comprising the step of displaying the digitally stored programs and associated program data in a language on the user television program equipment with the interactive television program guide using the default language playback option.

65. The method defined in claim 63 further comprising the step of displaying the digitally stored programs and program data in a video format on the user television equipment with the interactive television program guide using the default video format playback option.

66. The method defined in claim 63 further comprising the steps of:

 determining whether the digitally stored programs contain advertising using the interactive television program guide; and

 skipping the advertising information when displaying the digitally stored programs and

programming data with the interactive television program guide using the skip commercials playback option.

67. The method defined in claim 55 further comprising the step of providing a user with an opportunity to select components for display in screens that display program information.

68. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising the step of displaying a recording schedule screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

69. The method defined in claim 68 further comprising the steps of:

indicating the programs currently scheduled for storage by the digital storage means;

providing a user with an opportunity to select one of the programs; and

displaying a selected program listing information screen for the selected program on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

70. The method defined in claim 69 wherein the step of displaying a selected program listing information screen comprises the step of displaying one or more fields of associated program data for the selected program.

71. The method defined in claim 70 further

comprising the steps of:

displaying one or more user fields; and
providing a user with an opportunity to
enter user information into one or more of the user
fields.

72. The method defined in claim 54 further
comprising the steps of:

displaying a program listings screen on the
user television equipment using the interactive
television program guide; and

providing the user with an opportunity to
select a program listing.

73. The method defined in claim 72 wherein
the means for displaying program listings further
comprises means for displaying program listings in
subsets of listings according to one or more
organization criteria.

74. The method defined in claim 73 further
comprising the step of providing a user with an
opportunity to select the organization criteria.

75. The method defined in claim 73 further
comprising the step of providing a user with an
opportunity to define the organization criteria.

76. The method defined in claim 72 further
comprising the step of displaying program listings in
sorted lists according to sorting criteria.

77. The method defined in claim 76 further comprising the step of providing the user with an opportunity to select the sorting criteria.

78. The method defined in claim 72 wherein the step of displaying a program listings screen further comprises the step of displaying listings of programs stored on a digital storage device.

79. The method defined in claim 78 further comprising the step of displaying a program listings information screen for the selected program listing on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

80. The method defined in claim 79 wherein the step of displaying a program listings information screen further comprises the step of displaying one or more fields of associated program data selected from the group consisting of: title, description, episode, channel, duration, viewed, cast members, category(ies), language, video format, start and end time, date, re-run indicator, stereo indicator, close-captioned indicator, and other information.

81. The method defined in claim 78 further comprising the steps of:

displaying one or more on-screen options; and

providing a user with an opportunity to select an on-screen option.

82. The method defined in claim 72 wherein the step of displaying program listings further comprises the step of displaying program listings in a program listings grid.

83. The method defined in claim 72 wherein the step of displaying a program listings grid further comprises the step of displaying one or more rows of listings of programs stored by the digital storage means.

84. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising the step of displaying the digitally stored programs and associated program data on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide to provide users with an opportunity to access the associated program data as if the programs and program data were being originally aired.

85. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising the step of digitally storing additional program components on a digital storage device.

86. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising the step of providing a user with an opportunity to provide user added information.

87. The method defined in claim 54 further comprising the step of transferring the digitally stored programs to a secondary storage device using the interactive television program guide.

88. A method in which programs and associated program data are displayed for users by an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, comprising the steps of:

digitally storing the programs and associated program data using the interactive television program guide; and

maintaining a directory of the digitally stored associated program data using the interactive television program guide.

89. The method define in claim 88 further comprising the step of displaying a directory listing screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

90. The method defined in claim 89 further comprising the steps of:

indicating directory entry information; and

providing a user with an opportunity to select directory entry information;

displaying a full entry information screen in response to the selection by a user of directory information.

91. The method defined in claim 90 further comprising the step of displaying a plurality of fields of directory entry information selected from the group consisting of: title, description, episode, channel, duration, viewed, cast members, category(ies), language, video format, start and end time, date, re-

run indicator, stereo indicator, close-captioned indicator, and other information.

92. The method defined in claim 91 further comprising the steps of:

displaying one or more user-defined fields; and

providing a user with an opportunity to enter user information in one or more of the user-defined fields.

93. The method defined in claim 88 further comprising the steps of:

displaying an edit screen; and

editing portions of the digitally stored programs and associated program data from the digital storage device using the interactive television program guide.

94. The method defined in claim 93 further comprising the step of providing a user with an opportunity to define the portions of the digitally stored programs and associated program data edited by the editing means.

95. The method defined in claim 94 further comprising the step of providing a video feedback area.

96. The method defined in claim 88 further comprising the steps of:

digitally storing the programs and associated program data on removable digital storage

media using the interactive television program guide; and

maintaining the digitally stored associated program data in a global media library using the interactive television program guide.

97. The method defined in claim 96 further comprising the step of displaying a global media library screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

98. The method defined in claim 97 further comprising the steps of:

providing a user with an opportunity to select a program stored on the removable storage media; and

displaying an indication that the removable storage medium containing the selected program is not loaded in the digital storage device.

99. A method in which programs and associated program data are displayed for users by an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, comprising the steps of:

digitally storing the programs and associated program data using the interactive television program guide;

defining a super-program sequence; and displaying the programs and segments of the programs and associated program data according to the defined super-program sequence on the user television equipment using the interactive television

program guide.

100. The method defined in claim 99 further comprising the step of displaying a super-program screen on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

101. The method defined in claim 100 further comprising the steps of:

 indicating programs stored on the digital storage device; and

 providing a user with an opportunity to select a program to be included in the super-program sequence.

102. The method defined in claim 100 further comprising the steps of:

 providing a user with an opportunity to define play segments; and

 displaying play segments of the programs and associated program data according to the super-program sequence on the user television equipment using the interactive television program guide.

103. The method defined in claim 102 further comprising the steps of:

 displaying a play segment indicator; and

 providing one or more markers for defining the play segment.

104. The method defined in claim 100 further comprising the step of providing a video feedback area.

105. The method defined in claim 99 further comprising the step of transferring the digitally stored programs according to the defined super-program to a secondary storage device using the interactive television program guide.